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Concerto Concert
Seniors Sneha Rao and Jueun Lee will perform a double concerto at the March 12 concert.
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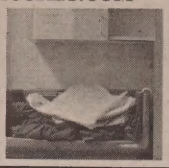

New School Store
The class of 2017's new school store in the main hallway has LHS apparel for everyone.
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Volume LVII Issue IV — March 2015

Opinion: Cafeteria staff aims to be innovative

■ Katie Chen
Staff Writer

According to its website, Whitsons Culinary Group is a family-oriented company that is dedicated to "providing wholesome, high quality menus, prepared fresh daily from locally sourced ingredients whenever available and in season" since 1979.

As soon as one enters the homepage, one is overwhelmed with images of freshly baked white bread, red apples big enough to fit snugly in your cupped palms, and children sporting smiles brighter than a flashlight beam in your eyes. It's an image far removed from the crinkly cellophane bags of whole grain bread used for our sandwiches, the plum-sized apples that fill the fruit racks, and the disgruntled glares from students who have found "nothing good to eat" in the cafeteria, again. Not to mention the experience of being told by a cafeteria employee to "take a fruit or veggie!" that every student who has passed through the lunch lines before has had.

But why is this happening?

"We just follow orders, we have to follow orders," cafeteria employee Mia Fusco said.

It turns out the fruit and vegetable requirements are mandated by the National School Lunch Program, a federal lunch subsidy program LHS is part of. Our school receives around 39 cents of reimbursement per student from the United States Department of Agriculture for the food it provides. Thanks to the NSLP, LHS lunches remain affordable at an average price of $3.25, a price unlikely to be seen in your neighborhood Qdoba or even McDonalds.

To receive the subsidies, Lexington High School must comply with USDA food standards. One such requirement is that students are served at least three items from five food categories: meat/meat alternative, dairy, bread/whole grain, fruit and vegetable. One of the three foods must be a fruit or veggie.

Staff photo by Alice Li

Two popular meals the cafeteria offers are the sandwich combo and nachos.

Perhaps it appears illogical to hand out food to students who will just throw it away, but failure to do so means LHS would lose its reimbursement from the USDA. And the consequences of that? Too terrible to contemplate.

Despite these strict nutritional requirements, the cafeteria team strives to compensate by being creative with their recipes. From salmon to dumplings to breaded tilapia, our lunch lines offer a diverse array of options.

"Each month I try to be innovative," said Kevin Silvia, food service director of the Lexington Schools district. "We want to push, and put things out there that will make kids go "Wow!""

So in reality, the school lunch team tries very hard to make meals that students will enjoy, while still adhering to the USDA guidelines and supporting local farms when possible. We buy a lot of our

[CAFETERIA, page 4]

Ineffective flu vaccine causing students to miss school

■ Ethan Kleppner
Elizabeth Nakhtigal
Staff Writers

This winter, many Lexington High School students have become sick due to the flu. This is partially because this year's flu vaccine has been ineffective.

Kristi Burns, a nurse at Lexington High School, said "[The virus isn't effective] in 23 percent of the people who get flu shots, which isn't very many. It does treat against a number of different viruses, but [with] 23 percent of all the viruses out there, it's not effective. And it's because the viruses have mutated into something that's not treated."

The scientific term for the mutation of these antigens is "antigenic drift," wrote Katherine Garnett, a doctor from Lexington Pediatrics, in an email interview. However, vaccine inefficiency is not new for Garnett who sees "patients who have received the flu shot or flu-mist and still get infected with the flu every winter."

Unfortunately, the nurse's office can't provide many detailed statistics on the recent flu outbreak. The school nurses don't keep a tally of which students with the flu have been vaccinated, said Burns. More importantly, most students with the flu just stay home, she added.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is critical to get a flu vaccine every year. Unvaccinated people are most susceptible to viruses. For example, a measles outbreak is occurring across the US due to unvaccinated people travelling and spreading the virus.

The CDC also writes on its website, "This season's vaccine reduces the risk of having to go to the doctor from flu infection in vaccinated people by 23 percent, which is about half of what is usually seen when vaccine viruses and circulating flu viruses are well-matched."

Even though many students have gotten sick, CDC data indicates that the elderly are suffering worst from this flu season. "Nearly 60 percent of flu-associated hospitalizations have been among people 65 years and older," according to the CDC.

Garnett also wrote that every year scientists conduct research in order to predict what strains of influenza will circulate the following "season," which is usually November to March at its peak, but can circulate into June. Some years the predictions are better than others.

"This year the prediction was adequate, but the virus shifted partway through the season, so it was predicted that the vaccines would not be as effective," Garnett wrote.

Garnett also wrote that although the vaccine is not perfect, it is still worth getting. It can decrease the severity of flu symptoms and possibly decrease the length of the disease.

[FLU, page 4]

Editorial

Major research projects, including the IRP and National History Day, need to be modified

Spanning a course of six months, countless hours of research and precious but finite in-lab work time carefully negotiated between students and teachers, the Independent Research Project is a tremendous rite of passage for many AP science students. Yet despite the problem-solving and research skills the IRP promotes, the time-intensive project is also a huge source of stress for students and teachers. The announcement that the IRP will no longer be mandatory for AP students starting next school year indicates that the science department is reconsidering the merit of this large-scale project.

Students must spend lots of time outside of school researching and doing experiments that are largely unrelated to their course of study, having to carve time out of their already busy schedules in order to use the school's highly sought-after laboratory equipment. Likewise, teachers have to sacrifice a lot of time in supervising these laboratories, organizing science fair presentations and advising students on their research. Moreover, many teachers significantly slow the pace of their curriculum during months of the IRP, forcing classes to cram more into the few months right before the AP exam.

The IRP's competitive nature and the significant effect it has on students' grades (on average 10-15 percent), however, call into question the so-called research skills and intellectual thinking that the IRP is said to foster. Rather than take intellectual risks and run the chance of inconclusive results, students may instead choose to research more predictable projects that are easier to discuss in their final paper. Moreover, connections that give some students access to outside labs and resources challenges the equity of the IRP, suggesting that students with greater financial and other constraints may have an advantage in conducting experiments.

Although major projects such as the IRP may be valuable, having them oriented around competitions and making up a major part of a student's year grade causes unnecessary stress. The alternative, perhaps, should be a pass/fail grade. Currently, some students may feel the need to spend long hours perfecting their project to advance in competitions, because students who advance to the Massachusetts Region IV Science Fair often automatically earn a better grade.

However, with a pass/fail system, students would be able to focus on completing the project thoroughly, rather than aiming for perfection. This way, students can develop valuable skills like formulating and answering their own research question without the additional pressure of having to get the highest

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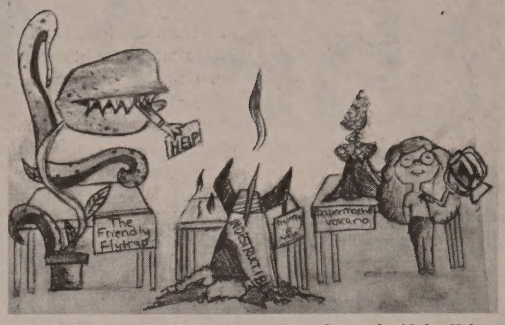
Unsigned editorials reflect the opinion of the majority of the editorial board.



Comic by Noha Yehia

Changes in standardized courses and tests are difficult for students

■ Colin Cantwell
Staff Writer

Changes in curricula and testing have been sweeping the country in the last few years. This movement has already affected the math curriculum at Lexington High School, and adjustments to the SAT and MCAS tests are also scheduled for the near future.

Education, like other disciplines, must constantly be improved and modernized. While these changes may be confusing for students at first, they are ultimately necessary to facilitate more effective learning.

The math curriculum was changed beginning with the freshman year of the class of 2016. All subjects became integrated in each math course (e.g. Math 3) rather than focusing on a specific subject

[GRADE GAP, page 7]

The Charlie Hebdo attack should lead to discussions

■ Richard Huang
Staff Writer

The Charlie Hebdo attack on Jan. 7 shocked the whole world, not only because of the death toll, but also because it directly attacked the ideals of freedom and liberty that are deeply ingrained in Western society.

The victims of the attack have been hailed as martyrs who courageously stood up for free speech. Demonstrators have acted around the globe, and the slogan "Je suis Charlie" has become a widespread expression of solidarity with the victims. France has offered more than one million euros to keep the comic going, and Google has offered $300,000 as well. But is this the right response?

First, let's get a couple things out of the way. No one deserves to die because of what they say or believe. We should mourn the victims of the attack not only because they courageously stood up for free speech, but also because they have families, rel-

[CHARLIE HEBDO, page 5]

Community college plan could reach LHS students

■ Eunice Kim
Avery Gehring
Staff Writers

During the 2015 State of the Union Address, President Obama proposed a plan to offer two years of free community college to students who maintain a 2.5 GPA and whose families earn less than $200,000 a year. This plan has caused debate among politicians, and it has the potential to bring massive change for American students.

Currently, about one student out of every 150 in the average Lexington High School graduating class attends community college. The potential policy and a change in students' attitudes towards community college could change this statistic and help families in Lexington avoid the enormous expense of college.

Many Lexington families are eligible for Obama's free tuition plan. According to city-data.com, the median household income of Lexington is around $139,462, which is under the $200,000 limit.

This means that with the new incentive of a free two-year college education, students with families within the income criteria may consider this option. As the policy becomes more widespread, it could become a popular choice for LHS students and families who would normally struggle to pay the tuition of higher education.

"If this proposal were to

[COLLEGE, page 7]

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Library reaches out to science and math users with new 3-D printer

■ Niha Putta
Staff Writer

The Lexington High School library purchased its first 3-D printer in June of 2014.

LHS librarian Harriet Wallen said that the main motivation was to expand the group of library users.

"Right now, the library is a place mainly for English and social studies, but with the 3-D printer we can expand to science and math users as well," said Wallen.

Dawn Belson, a member of the school support staff, said that 3-D printing makes three-dimensional objects using digital files.

After the printer is provided with a visual blueprint of an object, it takes between two hours to two days to print most objects for use in the school.

The printer has a wide variety of potential uses. "[It] is mainly used by the robotics teams. But once we had a kid make a trumpet mouthpiece using the printer," said Wallen.

Lyle Cheatham, a captain of LHS robotics team 2 Bits and a Byte, said that the robotics team also purchased its own 3-D printer.

"[The 3-D printer] allows us to construct parts that wouldn't be viable through standard construction methods," said Cheatham.

Cheatham said that members of 2 Bites and a Byte have been using their new printer frequently. But before they purchased it, they relied on the 3-D printer in the library and on printers that team members owned.

The physics department has also purchased its own 3-D printer, said Wallen.

So far, no teachers or faculty members have used the 3-D printer in the library. The librarians have used the 3-D printer to make a birdhouse, which is currently on display. "It took about 24 hours to make the whole birdhouse," said Belson.

The 2 Bits and a Byte team used their 3-D printer to make a small pulley. Cheatham said it took about three hours to make.

Although 3-D printers are becoming more accessible to the public, they are not inexpensive. Belson explained that each reel for the 3-D printer costs around $70. However, she said that this new technology is a great way for students to do group projects.

When asked about the future plans for the 3-D printer, Wallen said that she hopes to see the printer having an impact on more students past only the science and math departments.

"I can see these services being beneficial to the art, music and even social studies departments. There are endless possibilities with this printer," she said.

Staff photo by Niha Putta

The 3-D printer is located behind the school librarian's desk.

Even though not a lot of students know about the 3-D printer, sophomores Praneetha Bheemarasetty and Natalie Ramesh said that it is a useful and creative solution to open up the library to more students.

Class of 2017 opens school store

■ Catherine Cheng
Hanna Tuomi
Staff Writers

Tucked in a tiny closet between two doors to the auditorium, across from a trophy case, lies Lexington High School's new school store.

"We realized that all the apparel at LHS was for specific groups, but there was no apparel for everybody," said sophomore Sabrina Zhang, Treasurer of the class of 2017.

Established at the beginning of this academic school year, the store sells Lexington High School apparel including T-shirts ($12), synthetic shirts ($18), sweatshirts ($30), Camelback water bottles ($16) and school supplies ranging from notecards to pencils to envelopes and stamps. The store was created to promote school spirit and raise money for the Class of 2017, said Class Council adviser Bill Cole. It is run by the 2017 Class Council and is open from during first and second lunch every day.

The store was very busy when it first opened. Originally run out of Room 712, the store sold out of sweatshirts within months of opening, and had a wait list going as of Dec. 1, said Cole. With little advertising, simply one sign, a few homeroom announcements, and word of mouth, the store took off immediately. Students and teachers gathered to buy school apparel. The water bottles also became a popular item. However, as the year has progressed, interest in the store has decreased on both the council's side and the consumer's side, causing a plateau in business, said Cole.

The largest issue with the school store is its lack of space. Although there are shelves in the closet, it is still very tight, forcing the council to have to carefully select their inventory. They primarily chose which school supplies to sell based on a list created by Katherine Pike,

[STORE, page 7]

Staff photo by Anar Kansara

The school store, located in the main hallway, sells several types of LHS apparel

Science fair no longer required for AP students in 2015-2016

■ Soumya Ram
News Editor

Starting in the 2015-2016 school year, the Independent Research Project, previously mandatory for students taking AP Biology and AP Chemistry, and the Engineering Project, mandatory for students taking AP Physics, will no longer be part of the curriculum.

The main reasons for the change, said AP Chemistry teacher Janice Compton, are time constraints and stress.

"AP classes were designed to be taught as a second year course, but we cover it in one year," said Compton. "The IRP is a tremendous time sink for both teachers and students, [for example] supervising the projects. A lot of students need to come to the laboratories after class. If you're working with bacteria and chemicals, you have to do it after school. The new change will reduce stress on students taking AP classes."

Motivated students can do independent projects on their own and request a faculty member to mentor them, Compton said.

However, some AP science teachers disagree with this viewpoint. "If it ain't broke you don't fix it," said AP Biology teacher Susan Offner. "This is a program that goes back half a century. It's been highly successful and life changing for many students."

Offner said that the solution to teacher stress is to reduce the teaching load.

"People ought to be dealing with [teacher load] by having Level 1 and Level 2 be lab sciences, and have everybody teach three classes," Offner said. "You don't cut out the most important thing [the science fair] for other requirements."

The participation in the Independent Research Project can help spur an interest in science, said Offner. " I know students now think that they know what they want to be, but they don't. That's why I'll never be unemployed."

"One of my biggest prize winners [in the science fair], wound up as a history major. He had no intention of becoming a scientist, he just became fascinated with biology, and did a wonderful project, and it was a life-changing event for him," said Offner. "We just try to give students opportunities, and one of the things we should do is offer worthwhile projects."

[SCIENCE FAIR, page 7]

Harrington and Johnson play in local rock band

■ Brian Nam
Staff Writer

Courtesy of Noah Harrington

The members of The Third Wing, from left to right: Nick Lees, Colin Foote, Noah Harrington and Isaiah Johnson.

Two Lexington High School students, senior Noah Harrington and junior Isaiah Johnson, are part of a rock band called The Third Wing that performs locally.

The Third Wing includes bassist Harrington, vocalist and keyboard player Johnson, drummer Colin Foote, a junior at Winchester High School, and guitarist and bandleader Nick Lees, a senior at Cambridge School of Weston. They have been playing together since 2011.

The Third Wing's music is inspired by rock musicians and groups such as Jimi Hendrix, Guided by Voices and The Who.

"I had known Colin through our middle school jazz band, and a mutual friend of ours had asked us to accompany him singing at a talent show," Lees said. "We both knew Noah through a few ensembles he had played in, and so decided to start a band … with me singing for a solid two and a half years until Noah found Isaiah in his choir."

The band has played at venues such as the Hard Rock Café. They won second prize in a Winchester "Battle of the Bands" competition on June 6, 2014. They began to record an EP in January, and it will be released sometime in March.

"There is a lot of very positive energy and love in the band, and we take music very seriously and are always try to play our best," Harrington said. "We are very lucky to have such dedicated, hard-working musicians to work with, and that really raises everyone's game."

Each of the band members have other musical outlets that they take part in. Harrington, for example, is the bassist of the LHS Jazz Combo and the LHS Jazz Ensemble.

"Back in freshman and sophomore years we had more time to practice, but that has shrunk drastically over the past two as we have been sucked into more and more academic activities," Harrington said.

The band meets once a week, usually on weekends. When they have recording sessions or performances approaching, they try to meet more often and run through their setlist.

"Playing shows [is the] best feeling in the world, and I really don't care how cliché that is," Lees said.

With Harrington and Lees graduating this year, the band is likely to break up after the seniors leave for college. However, they still plan to jam occasionally during vacations.

Lees said that the most important element of a rock band is energy.

"I see so many bands that play like statues, as if they're being forced to play their instruments," said Lees. "I'm not saying you should go crazy and sacrifice your playing for stage bravado, but you should have fun jamming with your friends."

From the start, Harrington knew that being part of a band would require dedication. "Improvement in every respect is a question of commitment and dedication," he said. "You have to want it badly enough that nothing else but your very best can do. Your passion will inspire others."

The Third Wing's next performance will be the next round of the Winchester Rock for Youth Battle of the Bands, which is on March 27 at 7 p.m. Updates and other show dates can be found on their Facebook page.

CAFETERIA - PAGE 1

fruit and veggies from local venues (52 percent of our cafeteria food comes from local vendors, farms such as Ciesluk Farm in South Deerfield, Long Plain Farm in Whately, and Zuchowski Farm in Hadley) especially in the warmer months when the foods are in season.

"I like that we have a circle in the community," said Silvia. "We are working now with a lot more local produce than we had in the past … we see more vegetables out there, and we want the kids to try them."

Though LHS food may seem monotonous, the cafeteria staff strives to provide options that are both creative and nutritious.

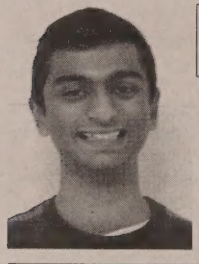
FLU - PAGE 1

"The bottom line is I (and all the doctors at Lexington Pediatrics) recommend all children get the flu shot or mist unless they have a medical reason not to," she wrote.

Conor Ireland is a freshman at LHS who missed two days of school in January due to the flu. "I did not miss much work, thankfully," Ireland said. "However, I did have to take my science midterm after school. I had to make up the work, which was complicated because I missed the class-time explanation."

This is especially aggravating to Ireland because he already received a flu shot earlier this year.

"I'm personally rather mad that they screwed up on the vaccine," he said.



collegebored

College is crucial, but tuitions are rising

■ Ashvin Antony
Columnist

Regardless of your age, you all have surely had the following devious two words ingrained into your brain's memory storage facilities: college debt.

In the past 30 years or so, tuition rates have increasingly gained an appetite for the green delicacies of family and student bank accounts.

According to studies conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, average total fees for undergraduate enrollment have more than tripled since the 1980s, when the value floated around $8,000.

As a result, student loan-borrowers have racked up more than $1.2 trillion in total student debt, according to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Thanks to gluttonous college fees, the majority of college students here in the US aren't even able to graduate. According to the US News, only 41% of students attending four-year universities nationwide graduate, opting for jobs that can potentially ease the ravenous debts.

With university fees skyrocketing to unprecedented, mind-numbing heights, it's no wonder that prospective students are nowadays questioning whether a college education is even worth the money anymore.

In fact, according to a poll conducted by the Pew Research Center, approximately 57% of Americans believe that the higher education system in the United States fails to provide students with good value for the money they spend.

This sentiment is echoed through the high rate of high school graduates choosing not to pursue higher educational learning. According to the US government Bureau of Labor Statistics, just 65.9% of high school graduates choose to go to college, a percentage that has been steadily declining since it peaked at 70.9% in 2009.

Despite the menacing growls of hunger erupting from university fees' stomachs, college is nonetheless the apex of education. The lack of incentive students have towards pursuing higher educational degrees does not reflect college's true educational and experiential value. To put it bluntly, college is the most effective route to economic and personal success.

As stated in a speech by Harvard University President Drew Faust, it "takes you to places you've never been before," providing educational and life experiences that best prepare students for their future lives.

The statistics cement this fact.

According to the Economic Policy Institute in Washington, Americans with four-year college degrees make 98% more an hour on average than people without a degree.

On an even more humane scale, recent studies from the University of Virginia and the Pew Research Institute have discovered a correlation between a college education and happiness, as a college degree often opens the door for a richer, more fulfilling life.

The rising rates of college fees are inexplicable, and legislative measures should be taken to quell their ravenous nature. Yet, students should pursue the best possible education they can, rather feeling discouraged from channeling their birthright.

Staff photo by Susie Kim

Seniors Sneha Rao and Jueun Lee are the soloists for Concerto for Violin and Cello, Op.102 by Johannes Brahms.

LHS Concerto Concert to feature four senior soloists on March 12

■ William Zen
Staff Writer

The 27th annual Lexington High School Concerto Concert will be held on Thursday, March 12 at 7:30 p.m. in the LHS auditorium. A second concerto concert will be held in the fall.

Any student in an LHS musical ensemble can enter the competition for his or her instrument. The soloists performing in the spring concert include seniors Jueun Lee, Sneha Rao, Joe Blumberg and Ben Oye. Juniors Corrine Auger and Meredith Hiller will perform in the fall concert. All performers will be accompanied by the LHS Chamber Orchestra.

The soloists are selected based on their performance in the LHS Concerto Competition. Janet Haas, a LHS string teacher and conductor, is on the judging panel for the competition.

In an email interview, Haas wrote, "Each contestant chooses his/her own piece and finds his/her own accompanist. The contestants are given … 8 minutes. Players perform one movement of any concerto that has an orchestral accompaniment."

On deciding the winners, "The number varies from year to year," wrote Haas. "Minimum 1, maximum 4-5. The winners are chosen after we hear everyone. I ask each judge to pick their top 4-5 performers. Often the top 1 or 2 are in agreement and we discuss any discrepancies." Winners cannot win the competition the next year.

Haas also wrote that she is "seriously considering having a recorded round before a final live round - so the evening can be shorter and contestants can play with less time pressure."

The soloists in the spring concert are all seniors who have more experience. For example, Lee previously performed in the competition as a sophomore. He will also be performing in a concerto with the Lowell Philharmonic Orchestra in March.

In this concert, Lee and Rao will perform a double concerto, which has not been done in the Concerto Concert for several years.

"A lot of the pieces that you hear about, they're solo works but I thought it'd be cool to do something a little different," Lee said. "It's very reassuring to have someone right next to you who is also a soloist."

BASKETBALL - PAGE 8

though the team's performance didn't produce the record the team hoped for, the number of wins did not reflect the team's effort level.

"I think we have a great group of guys who play hard and compete as hard as they can and play as hard as they can every single night and every practice. Every game, everything they do, they do as hard as they can to the best of their ability," Hobbs said.

Despite their losing record, the team has had several close losses.

"Guys compete, and I think when you compete, you play hard, you're in every game, you give yourself an opportunity to have experiences," Hobbs said.

Even with the lack of wins, Lenrow still enjoyed the basketball season.

"It's a great group of guys, we're going out and giving our best effort, and we're having fun," Lenrow said.

Overheard: Fat-shaming and implausible weight standards are hurtful and insulting

■ Alana Kepler
Columnist

OVERHEARD in the halls of LHS: Wow! You look so pretty — like, really skinny.

Three years ago, my youngest cousin, eight years old, told me that she wasn't pretty because she wasn't as thin as the other girls in her ballet class.

Even at a young age, body-shaming is drilled into our heads. From health classes on loving your body to television shows like The Biggest Loser, Western beauty standards are heavily debated. It's time to change the way we talk about them.

When we associate thinness with attractiveness, as this student did, we alienate people based solely on their body type. One body type, with few variations, graces the cover of every popular magazine. Those few cover models who don't fit the mold are photoshopped to better fill what editors presume to be the readers' view of beauty.

Many articles about supporting fat people - that is to say, people whose bodies have outgrown our cultural values - avoid the word itself, demonstrating that this "fat is bad" rhetoric can seep even into those writings that try to criticize that same concept.

While we may be able to discuss the perils of fat-shaming and the necessity of having the vocabulary to talk about it, it's important that we're nonetheless aware of our actions towards individuals. "Fat" may be an accurate way to describe a portion of the population, but is an ultimately hurtful way to address a single person.

Others explain the immorality of fat-shaming by declaring that fat people simply can't help the way they look. While this is true in many cases, the idea that the only reason to allow them to be comfortable in their bodies is that they're "trapped" that way reduces their humanity by implying that their bodies are "bad" and thus deserving of reproach.

A common excuse for fat-shaming is the idea that large bodies are inherently unhealthy. Poor health, while potentially correlative with physical size, is not caused by simply being overweight, according to a study done by researchers at the University of South Carolina. Instead, fitness - defined, in this case, by endurance while running - was found to have a greater effect on longevity.

While health concerns may seem like legitimate reasons to critique someone's body, the only person who should worry about someone's health is that person themselves. Whether or not their weight is related to their level of fitness is knowledge for them and them only.

The culture of fat-phobia in our nation is extremely detrimental. Fat people are seen as considerably less employable than others, are more prone to street harassment, and rarely receive the respect they deserve.

Whether you're insulting a stranger on his or her body fat or complimenting a friend on their lack thereof, treating one type of body as better than another is never acceptable. It's time to stop fat shaming, once and for all.

CHARLIE HEBDO - PAGE 2

atives, and friends whom we should respect.

On the other hand, those who do not support Charlie Hebdo are not against freedom of speech or aligning themselves with terrorists. Not everyone endorses the content and political messages put out by the satirical magazine.

Satire, when used correctly, can be a powerful tool for social change. "France has a long standing tradition, starting with Voltaire, of [using] satire as a way to incur political and social change," said Rina Farber-Mazor, a French teacher at LHS.

However, when a privileged group uses satire to offend an already marginalized group, the satire loses its potential to bring about change and instead cements the status quo. The Charlie Hebdo magazine does exactly that.

Many have rushed to the defense of Charlie Hebdo, arguing that the magazine offends everyone, and thus is justified in offending a marginalized group.

But Charlie Hebdo's policy of mocking everything is irresponsible. Instead of defending the political and social implications of their magazine, the cartoonists simply dodge any criticism using the same excuse: we are equal opportunity offenders.

Zachary Steigerwald-Schnall, a junior at LHS, said he believes that the cartoonists "were making statements to appeal to some at the expense of others."

Another defense of the magazine is that many illustrations of Muhammad were intended to critique ISIS and radicalism. But in many instances, the magazine simply offended all Muslims by going against their belief that depicting Muhammad in any form is blasphemous.

This topic brings to light the social and political differences between the United States and France. France currently has a policy of laïcité, which roughly translates to secularism. But instead of promoting equality as intended, this policy often discriminates against marginalized communities, Muslims in particular.

For example, head scarves are banned in public and Halal food is not allowed in school cafeterias, even though most state holidays are Roman Catholic holy days and schools are still allowed to hold Mass.

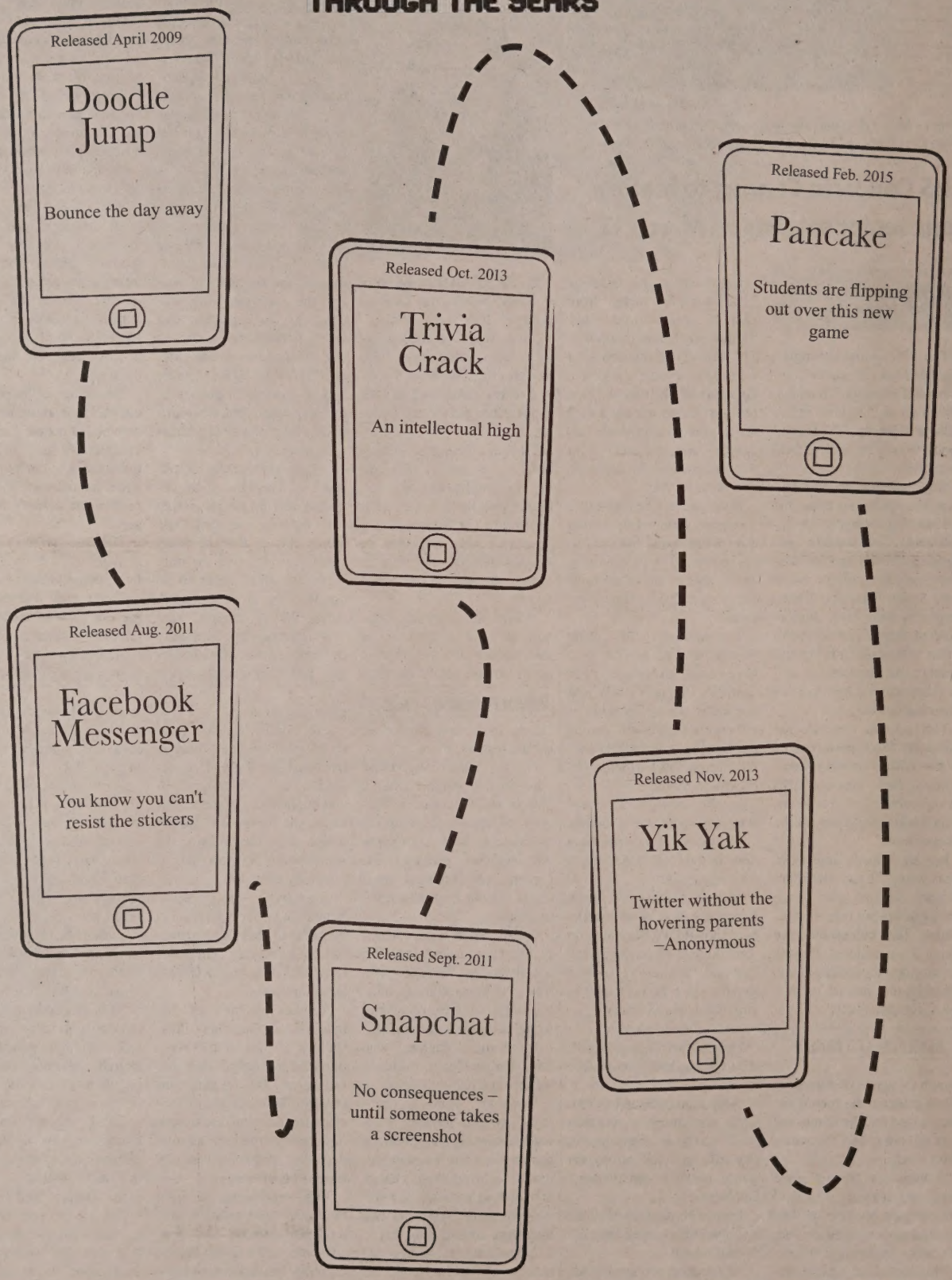
Farber-Mazor says she believes that the attacks should foster important discussions in our community.

"It is an occasion to examine our own values when we talk about the separation of church and state, integrating populations, and the subject of free speech," she said.

These are questions and topics that have no right answers, and they are in no way unique to France. Issues of race, identity and freedom of speech are very pertinent in American society as well. It is time that we have these discussions in our community and recognize the political and social implications of our actions and words.

WHAT'S APP-ENING?

THE MOST POPULAR APPS FOR STUDENTS THROUGH THE YEARS



Courtesy of Clipart Panda

COLLEGE - PAGE 2

come into effect, it will really help families [who are] struggling, and who truly couldn't afford college," said Carrie Thibodeau, a guidance counselor at LHS.

With the option of community college, Lexington graduates will be able to avoid the crippling college debts becoming more and more common in the U.S.

For some students, the proposed policy may not only help with expensive college tuitions, but could be the deciding factor in actually going to or staying in college.

A second-semester student at the Bunker Hill Community College told the Boston Globe, "I know a lot of people who didn't come back this semester because they just didn't have enough money."

With this program available, students would have the chance to get a full two years of college education without worrying about the cost.

However, there is a stigma associated with community college at LHS that may prevent students from considering this option.

"I don't want to generalize but if you're in the upper middle class, you're not even considering community college, because they often tend to have a bad reputation," said LHS junior Regan Woodnutt. "You're considering private colleges like, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford ... not community college."

It may take some time in order for attitudes at LHS to change. If Obama's policy is passed, more students would eventually consider community college as an option. By making community college even less expensive, the policy would facilitate this process and potentially alleviate the stigma against community college at LHS.

Overall, Obama's plan to provide two years of free community college would be beneficial to students throughout the nation. Not only would it bring change to attitudes in Lexington, but also families throughout the country who once found the idea of paying for college impossible would have a new option. This change could bring many opportunities to young adults and may change the way Americans view the college experience.

SCIENCE FAIR - PAGE 3

AP Chemistry students already have access to worthwhile projects, Compton said. "In AP, there's so much lab work, so many lab reports, that I don't really think it's necessary for students to do a science fair project. It might actually be a good thing for [College Preparatory 1] classes to do. That makes more sense."

Jinny Jang, a junior, agrees with Compton. "I don't think the science fair is necessary. AP students already have so much work."

EDITORIAL - PAGE 3

grade possible.

Students, however, who are highly motivated and passionate about these projects can still spend their time perfecting their project. This measure would also improve the overall quality of the projects entered in these competitions, as students who were content with the passing grade would not feel the need to enter competitions.

The science department, for the next school year, has made the Independent Research Project optional. We support this measure, and would like to see other major projects, including National History Day, embark on this trend or adopt a pass/fail record. Such a measure would go a long way towards reducing student and teacher stress while preserving the competitive aspects of these projects for people who enjoy them most.

GRADE GAP - PAGE 2

(e.g. geometry).

Beginning in spring 2016, the SAT will also change. The College Board is returning to scoring the test out of 1600 and making the essay optional. Both the Math and Reading sections will be changed to have a greater emphasis on real-world situations.

One final change that may also occur in the coming years is the removal of the MCAS. The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers exam was pilot-tested by many students across the state last year.

This year, school districts were given the choice whether to use PARCC or MCAS for third through eighth graders, and Lexington chose MCAS. 10th graders across the state will still take MCAS to graduate this year, giving students one more year under the aging system.

A common complaint among students is that future evaluations will be significantly more difficult. Educators who are used to assessing student progress based on the old tests will have to adjust their judgments to the new ones.

Students who have spent years preparing for the old SAT and the MCAS are also frustrated with the new tests. The first year of the new SAT will be a challenge for students who are preparing for a test about which they know very little.

"The people who studied hard for the old SAT won't stand out as much," Max Gusinov, a sophomore, said.

Another issue is that new educational styles have a history of beginning badly, as evidenced by the math curriculum change.

"The curriculum lacked continuity," Duncan McCallum, a junior, said. "Previous grades covered various amounts of the material and the change was jumpy."

The first year with the new SAT and the first year of using the PARCC will likely follow a similar pattern. Colleges will need to adjust the typical SAT score gradients from which they accept students instead of trying to use the old ones.

The same goes for the PARCC. The state is going to have to change what it means to be "Advanced," "Proficient," "Needs Improvement" or "Warning/Failing."

Changes to the American educational system are necessary to keep it up to date with the latest global trends. All we ask as students is that the higher-ups in this system bear with us through a difficult first year under a new test and not compare us to students who came before us.

STORE - PAGE 3

librarian at Lexington High School. It listed the items that students most frequently asked for when at the library, said Cole.

The store also provides the students of 2017 Class Council with real life experience in managing finances.

"One thing that is really unusual for us is that the places that are holding proms and dances are booking up way in advance … Now, we need to put a $2,000 deposit down for junior prom at the beginning of sophomore year, and we anticipate having to do that for our senior prom by the end of the summer," said Cole.

The council plans to use the money raised from the store to help pay for the deposits.

"It [the store] allows the students to get experience at retail, and thinking about selling items and handling money," Cole added.

Two years ago, another attempt at a school store was made by the Lexington, Arlington, Bedford, Burlington and Belmont program, but it did not last, said Cole.

This store is more long-term, as the 2017 Class Council is planning to get other class councils involved and extend store hours. Also, advertising projects are already in effect, as the store gears up to hit social media using video clips and other undisclosed strategies.

The 2017 Class Council's store is here to stay, said Cole.

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- Bhavani Tirupati
- Lorraine Bennett
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Sophomore Reactions to Career Day

"It was great to learn that it's OK if we have no idea what we want to do in the future because neither did the speakers. And they're all doing what they love right now. Everything will turn out fine."

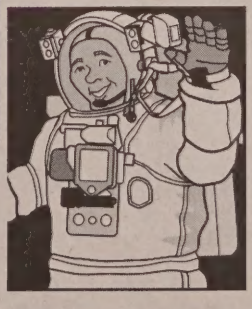
- Natalie Ramesh

"I thought it was interesting. I liked the single panel but I think that the panelists should have gone more specific about their specific career paths and not how they got there in general."

- Lucy Chin

"One thing I learned from Career Day is that there is no definite path. Just because you pick a career doesn't necessarily mean it'll be your occupation ten years down the road. You might find that you actually abhor the career you picked and would like to switch, so just remember that choosing your career isn't set in stone."

-Connor Hausmann



"Career Day was interesting and it was rewarding to have multiple insights from workers in various sectors. They all gave great advice."

-Marertu Girma

Now in its fourth year, volleyball team eyes program's future

■ Dabin Kang
Staff Writer

Courtesy of Hugh O' Neil

The 2013-14 Lexington boys' volleyball team prepare for the playoff game against Cambridge Rindge and Latin.

Four years ago, the LHS boys' volleyball team was created, giving many students an opportunity to play the sport at a competitive level in high school.

"I wanted to create an opportunity for the boys to play volleyball because the interest level was so high," said Jane Bergin, head coach of the boys' varsity volleyball team. "[I want] Lexington to have a relatively new sport in the springtime for the kids to try out for."

According to Bergin, the boys' volleyball team was created to cater to those who weren't interested in the available sports at LHS but were still athletic enough to play on a varsity sports team.

"I just marvel at the kids and how much hard work they put into this program and in such short time," Bergin said.

Although the team is fairly new and not as big as the girls' volleyball team, Bergin said that each member of the team has put in a lot of effort and dedication into their work as a part of a growing community.

"We have always had great guys on the team," said senior Owen Warren, captain of the boys' volleyball team. "It's always something I look forward to."

Warren, during his freshman year, first tried out for the boys' basketball team but was unable to make the cut. However, he still wanted to be a part of the LHS sports community.

Remembering that he had a great time in his Physical Education volleyball class, Warren decided to try out for the volleyball team. After starting to improve his skills and actually getting to learn the sport, Warren said that he fell in love with it.

"I can't wait for the next season to start," Warren said, as the team is preparing itself for another run at the state title this year after qualifying for the state tournament in each of the previous three years.

According to Warren, another focus of the volleyball team is giving back to the community and getting younger players interested in the sport.

"This year we are starting a clinic for middle schoolers to get younger kids involved in volleyball and give them an opportunity to play a sport they have most likely never played before," Warren said.

Even though the team has only existed for four years, Bergin and current players are still focused on ensuring that there will be continued interest in future years to allow the program to keep growing.

Winter cheerleading squad has been shrinking

■ Alexandria Snyders Dykeman
Nikki Kim
Staff Writers

Staff photo by Thomas Arnow

Kristina Whalen and Olivia Byrd perform at the Lexington boys' varsity basketball game.

This year, the Lexington High School cheerleading squad has experienced a decrease in participation for some varsity sports such as basketball.

There are several potential explanations for this decrease whether it's a lack of interest from the overall student body or the apparent lack of respect that the girls have been getting at LHS, according to Laurie Green, the coach of Lexington's cheerleading squad.

Green has been coaching cheerleading for six years after cheering in college and high school.

Some LHS students were not aware that the school has a cheerleading squad.

"Even with all of the sports that are offered at LHS, I didn't know there was a cheerleading squad because I don't think it's a very popular sport in the community at-large," senior Pau Costa said.

According to Green, not many high schools in the Middlesex League have cheerleading squads for the basketball team, and these cheerleading squads are usually smaller.

"This is due mostly in part to football cheerleaders who compete in All-Star cheerleading in the winter or are involved in other sports," Green said.

However, the cheerleading squad for the varsity football team has not experienced the same decrease in participation that those of other sports have. Additionally, the football cheerleading squad competes in all-star cheerleading competitions, unlike the basketball cheer squad.

"Lexington's attitude towards the football cheer team has come full circle since I began six years ago," said Green. "There is no shrinking with football cheerleading, in fact our numbers have increased over the years."

To the shrinking of the number of basketball cheerleaders, she said, "There is not too much I can [do] besides promote and advertise for it and hope for the best."

Green is also unable to attend many of the practices and games during the winter due to her schedule and, as a result, is not involved as much in the winter season than in the fall season.

According to freshman cheerleader Payton Harris, many LHS students would enjoy cheerleading if they tried it, and this would help the cheerleading squad grow.

LHS basketball team reflects on tough year with optimism

■ Matthew Weiss
Staff Writer

The Lexington High School varsity boys' basketball team wrapped up its season over February break.

The team's record was not as good as the players expected, but they still saw value in the season, according to junior Alex Lenrow, a member of the team.

"Just because you lose a game, it's still a tremendous learning opportunity for us to reflect on what we need to do and how we need to improve and I think the same thing has to happen when you win," said varsity coach Reginald Hobbs.

The team lost games this year, but the players still enjoyed their experiences.

"We're not great, I think we're 3-16, 3-17," said Alex Lenrow, a junior and a member of the varsity basketball team. However, Lenrow added that "[being on the team] is a good experience."

Hobbs believes that .al-

[BASKETBALL, page 5]